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10/14/2014

October ASRC Meeting

Agenda and Pre-reads

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AGENDA

ACADEMIC STANDARDS REVIEW COMMISSION

October 20, 2014

1:00-5:00PM

Meeting called by	Co-Chairs
Attendees:	Commission Members
Please read:	Provided Pre-reading materials
Please bring:	Questions regarding CCSS for ELA

1:05PM – 1:10PM	Read and Approve Minutes	Co-Chair
1:10PM – 1:20PM	Individual Goals and Priorities	Co-Chair
1:20PM – 1:30PM	ASRC Guiding Principles Review/Approval	Co-Chair
1:30PM – 1:45PM	Review Draft Execution Framework/Timeline	Co-Chair
1:45PM – 3:15PM	Review CCSS for ELA	Dir Robin McCoy, DPI
3:15PM – 3:20PM	Break	
3:20PM – 4:45PM	Continue Review of CCSS for ELA	Dir Robin McCoy, DPI
4:45PM – 5:00PM	Status of Key Actions	
5:00PM	New Business, Adjournment	

It is the duty of every Commission member to avoid both conflicts of interest and the appearances of conflict. If any Commission member has any known conflict of interest or is aware of facts that might create the appearance of such conflict, with respect to any matters coming before the Commission today, please identify the conflict or the facts that might create the appearance of a conflict to ensure that any inappropriate participation in that matter may be avoided. If at any time, any new matter that raises a conflicts issue arises during the meeting, please be sure to identify it at that time.

MINUTES – SEPTEMBER MEETING

Academic Standards Review Commission
September 22, 2014

Opening: Chairman Bill Cobey

- Expressed his expectations for standards to be clear, concise, measurable, and age appropriate.
- Standards need to be objectively evaluated and be based on research not emotion.
- Expressed a need for testimony to be supported with solid facts that stipulate which standards are appropriate and which standards need to be changed.
- Notified the Commission that the State Board of Education five year review of standards is occurring simultaneously.
- Standards do not necessarily dictate teaching. It is ultimately the responsibility of local education agencies (LEAs) to determine curricula and teaching methods.

Senator Tillman:

- SB812 created the Commission to make the standards that NC uses our own standards.
- This is very serious work.
- Common Core is off the books and we must own NC standards.
- Commission is charged to come up with NC standards that are as rigorous as or more rigorous than the Common Core and other state's standards.
- Expressed his expectation for improvement on what is already out there.
- Legislature will not take something that is a rehash.
- Curriculum and assessments have to be a big part of whatever emerges from the Commission.

Representative Horn:

- Curriculum and standards are inextricably linked.
- Common Core is anathema to General Assembly.
- This is a sovereign state; because the US Constitution is silent on these matters, the authority to decide these matters belongs to the State.
- We need to be in a competitive environment globally.
- Teach more, test less.
- NC is in the bottom quartile in American education.
- Cannot have a permanent underclass.
- We must raise the bottom.
- Our standards must be among the highest in the nation.
- Standards must be clear, concise, and rigorous.
- Commission is not in this alone, legislators have their backs.
- The Legislature will work with the Commission to ensure sufficient support to complete the mission.
- Legislators are looking to the Commission to provide sound, reasonable advice on how to move forward with standard setting.
- Our kids are depending on the Commission and Rep. Horn needs the group to tell us where we are going.

Introductions of Commission: All Commission members introduced themselves and provided some background of their experience.

1. Andre Peek: Wake County, Governor appointee
2. Tammy Covil: New Hanover County, House appointee
3. Dr. Jeffery Isenhour: Catawba County, House appointee
4. Katie Lemons: Stokes County, House appointee
5. Denise Watts: Mecklenburg County, House appointee
6. Ann B. Clark: Iredell County, Senate appointee
7. Dr. Laurie McCollum: Rockingham County, Senate appointee
8. Jeannie Metcalf: Forsyth County, Senate appointee
9. Dr. John Scheick: Wake County, Senate appointee
10. Bill Cobey: Chair/SBE; Durham County, State Board of Education member
11. Dr. Olivia Oxendine: Robeson County, State Board of Education member

Election of the Co-Chairs:

- Both Jeannie Metcalf and André Peek volunteered for the positions.
- Dr. Oxendine made a motion for Metcalf and Peek to be co-chairs. The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission.

Commission Discussion:

Commission Organization/Logistics:

- Need to work on organization of Commission—funding and staffing.
- Quorum is 9 members per statute.
- Are funds available through General Assembly (meeting rooms)?
- Per diem is for travel.
- Commission shall have final report to GA at time of termination of Commission, which is December 31, 2015.
- Chris Meers is the point of contact in the NC Department of Administration (DOA) and will be able to address these questions. Per legislation, the Commission is administratively housed in DOA.
- Commission asked to be provided copies of and a folder for standards.
 - Action item: Zane Stillwell will provide to Commission members.
- Commission spoke about holding conference calls and video conferencing, but all agreed in-person would be the best meetings.
 - Holding a quorum for conference calls is questionable.
 - Action item: State Board of Education will speak with legal.
 - Would video conferencing be different?
 - Can Commission members hold small group meetings?
 - Question asked about how the Commission can gain legal assistance? How does Commission get answers to questions and from whom?
- Questions about how many meetings should be scheduled? How will Commission members know what happens between meetings?
 - Action item: Meeting schedule: 3rd Mondays monthly; 1/2 days (1-5 PM); needs to be calendared.
- Commission requested a database be started, beginning with Commission contact list.
- Designated spokespeople for commission? Voted unanimously: co-chairs.

Commission's Body of Work:

- Commission has the latitude to set its own agenda and strategy.
- Commission needs to be an independent body.
 - When GA was asked for direction, response was no direction will be given; GA desires this to be an organic process; the Legislature does not want to impose any directions on this Commission.
- Strong desire to tap into current resources/research.
- Need to build a public website to facilitate communication with broader audience
- Spoke about surveys:
 - Want to gain authentic information with open-ended questions.
 - Survey teachers: what is positive about the standards, what is not?
 - Engage the larger community through surveys, parents and educators.
 - Some suggested that this is a specific skill set and Commission needs to ensure any survey taken is valid.
 - Need to be very careful about what we include in surveys of stakeholders.
 - Do not need a badly written/organized survey.
 - Need to ensure there is budget for surveys.
 - The more detailed the survey, the better.
 - Need to ensure the survey is relevant.
 - Agree that a group of Commission members (and advisors) should write the surveys and work with LEAs.
 - Want to explore business support.
 - Action item: Dr. Laurie McCollum (Rockingham County) volunteered to head the development of the surveys.
- Commission also voiced interest to hold focus groups.
 - There are infrastructures of groups to use as focus groups (superintendents, principals, teachers, parents).
 - Desire to include a dialogue with students also.
 - Tammy Covil (New Hanover County) volunteered to head the development of focus groups.
- Direction: Look at SB812—Section 2 is charge for the Commission—comprehensive review of reading and math to make recommendations.
- Assemble context experts.
- Commission wants to build a knowledge base to ensure consistency.
 - Need to ensure Commission members are informed about Common Core Standards; don't need to re-invent what has already been done.
 - All Commission members need to understand Standards and how they are being implemented.
 - DPI experts can talk about the natural evolution of implementation of Common Core Standards.
 - NC is in 3rd year of implementation.
 - Some changes already recommended (e.g., Math 2.50).
 - Issue: standards are interpreted differently by different segments; need to establish a common understanding of standards.
 - Need to fully understand standards – which standards are good and can be left alone? And which standards does the Commission need to concentrate on?
 - Asked if they can interview math/English teachers from all grade levels?
 - Have heard more complaints about math than English standards.
- Spoke about consultants; asked if Commission has funding for external expertise.
 - Consultant: needs to be informed, transparent.
- Next Steps: develop knowledge base, develop outline and approach, speak about formal data and surveys, who does the Commission want to bring in for discussions and what budget exists to do so?

Next Steps:

- Develop an outline of Commission's approach.
- Develop knowledge base (surveys, formal data, etc.)
- Develop list of who the Commission wants to talk to.
- Next meeting will be October 20th from 1 – 5 p.m.
 - Want to understand Commission's budget and support.
 - Want to review Commission's procedures; gain consensus on process.
 - Want to understand rules by which Commission must operate.
 - Want to review Common Core Standards.
 - Want to review current implementation of Common Core Standards.
 - Want to review survey/focus group process.
- Meeting adjourned at 3:50PM.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Academic Standards Review Commission represents the North Carolina citizenry and is charged with ensuring that academic expectations meet the needs of all North Carolina students, adhere to North Carolina values and ensure the continued prosperity of the state's citizens.
- Standards should set expectations that prepare all North Carolina students to graduate ready to take credit-bearing coursework in technical or community college and universities, to enter the armed services and careers with the communications, problem solving and critical thinking skills needed for success.
- Standards should be developmentally appropriate, i.e. they should reflect the best thinking on how students learn and sequence expectations consistent with that knowledge.
- Review process should be transparent and incorporate feedback from North Carolina educators, parents, employers, higher education representatives and other appropriate stakeholders.
- North Carolina Standards should be clear, concise, rigorous and teachable.
- The Academic Standard Review Commission recommendations are to be achievable within the existing education budget.

OUR CHARGE

The Commission shall:

- (1) **Conduct a comprehensive review of all English Language Arts and Mathematics standards** that were adopted by the State Board of Education under G.S. 115C-12(9c) and propose modifications to ensure that those standards meet all of the following criteria:
 - a. Increase students' level of academic achievement.
 - b. Meet and reflect North Carolina's priorities.
 - c. Are age-level and developmentally appropriate.
 - d. Are understandable to parents and teachers.
 - e. Are among the highest standards in the nation.
- (2) As soon as practicable upon convening, and at any time prior to termination, **recommend changes and modifications to these academic standards to the State Board of Education.**
- (3) **Recommend to the State Board of Education assessments aligned to proposed changes** and modifications that would also reduce the number of high-stakes assessments administered to public schools.
- (4) **Consider the impact on educators, including the need for professional development**, when making any of the recommendations required in this section.

The Commission shall **assemble content experts** to assist it in evaluating the rigor of academic standards. The Commission shall also **involve interested stakeholders** in this process and otherwise **ensure that the process is transparent.**

The full bill can be found here - <http://www.ncleg.net/Sessions/2013/Bills/Senate/PDF/S812v7.pdf>

ASRC Operational Framework (Draft)

1. Develop key findings through various methods of investigation – Duration 4 Months
 - a. Develop fact based knowledge of CCSS and its implementation in NC
 - b. Mine existing reports specific to CCSS implementations within and beyond NC to develop deeper knowledge of the facts
 - c. Conduct Surveys of all stakeholders to gain on-the-ground understanding – how implemented, what's working/not working, key opportunities and challenges, what needs to change
 - d. Conduct interviews of representative groups/individuals – invite to regular commission meeting and/or arrange targeted sessions.
2. Construct foundation for recommendations - Duration 2 Months
 - a. Generate prioritized list of focus areas
 - b. Develop decision matrix
 - c. Generate list of potential actions/recommendations
3. Test and evaluate potential actions – Duration 2 Months
 - a. Conduct targeted research against list of potential actions/recommendations
 - b. Second round surveys and interviews
 - c. Assess actions against work being conducted within other groups (eg. DPI)
 - d. Test potential actions against guiding principles along with their achievability and costs.
4. Finalize Recommendations – Duration 2 Months
 - a. Final surveys/interviews
 - b. Develop communication/implementation plans
 - c. Draft final report and presentation for General Assembly

PRESENTATION MATERIALS

Please see email attachments for Director Robin McCoy's presentation overview. Hard copies will be provided at the meeting.